

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) A method for distributing information in a computer network, the method comprising:
 - dividing an electronic file into a plurality of pieces;
 - receiving a request for a file piece from a first client machine;
 - downloading the requested file piece to the first client machine;
 - receiving a request for said file piece from a second client machine; and
 - if said file piece requested from the second client machine has previously been downloaded to the first client machine responsive to the request for said file piece from the first client machine, redirecting the request of the second client machine to the first client machine.
2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - downloading all file pieces to a plurality of client machines, wherein the client machines function as peer-to-peer servers for other client machines requesting said file pieces.
3. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein each peer-to-peer server stores a unique file piece.
4. (Original) The method according to claim 2, further comprising:
 - receiving a request for a file piece stored in a first peer-to-peer server which is no longer connected to the computer network;
 - redirecting said request to a second peer-to-peer server containing a copy of said file piece; and
 - removing the first peer-to-peer server from a list of available peer-to-peer servers.
5. (Original) The method according to claim 2, further comprising:
 - sending a digest for a file piece to each client machine which has received that file piece.
6. (Original) The method according to claim 5, further comprising:

receiving a message from a client, wherein the message indicates that a peer-to-peer server has corrupted a file piece;

disconnecting the peer-to-peer server responsible for corrupting said file piece; and

retransmitting said file piece to said client, wherein the retransmitted file piece is free of any corrupting content.

7. (Currently amended) A method for distributing information in a computer network, the method comprising:

requesting, by a first machine, one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server;

receiving, by the first machine, the requested file piece from the server;

receiving, by the first machine, a request for said file piece from a ~~client~~ second machine, wherein the request is redirected from the server to the first machine; and then

sending, by the first machine, said file piece to said ~~client~~ second machine.

8. (Currently amended) A method for obtaining distributed information in a computer network, the method comprising:

requesting, by a first machine, one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server;

receiving, by the first machine and without further request of the requested file piece by the first machine, the requested file piece from a ~~client~~ second machine containing a copy of said file piece in lieu of receiving the requested file piece from the server, the copy of said file piece on the ~~client~~ second machine being the result of a previous request for the file piece from the ~~client~~ second machine to the server and receipt of the file piece from the server to the ~~client~~ second machine.

9. (Previously presented) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system, for distributing information in a computer network, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for dividing an electronic file into a plurality of pieces;

instructions for receiving a request for a file piece from a first client machine;

instructions for downloading the requested file piece to the first client machine;
instructions for receiving a request for said file piece from a second client machine; and
instructions for redirecting the request of the second client machine to the first client machine if said file piece requested from the second client machine has previously been downloaded to the first client machine responsive to the request for said file piece from the first client machine.

10. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 9, further comprising:
instructions for downloading all file pieces to a plurality of client machines, wherein the client machines function as peer-to-peer servers for other client machines requesting said file pieces.

11. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 10, wherein each peer-to-peer server stores a unique file piece.

12. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 10, further comprising:
instructions for receiving a request for a file piece stored in a first peer-to-peer server which is no longer connected to the computer network;
instructions for redirecting said request to a second peer-to-peer server containing a copy of said file piece; and
instructions for removing the first peer-to-peer server from a list of available peer-to-peer servers.

13. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 10, further comprising:
instructions for sending a digest for a file piece to each client machine which has received that file piece.

14. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, further comprising:
instructions for receiving a message from a client, wherein the message indicates that a peer-to-peer server has corrupted a file piece;

instructions for disconnecting the peer-to-peer server responsible for corrupting said file piece; and

instructions for retransmitting said file piece to said client, wherein the retransmitted file piece is free of any corrupting content.

15. (Currently amended) A computer program product for distributing information in a computer network, the computer program product comprising instructions for execution by a second client machine, including:

instructions for requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server;

instructions for receiving the requested file piece from the server;

instructions for receiving a request for said file piece from a client machine, wherein the request is redirected from the server to the second machine; and

instructions for sending said file piece to said client machine.

16. (Currently amended) A computer program product for obtaining distributed information in a computer network, the computer program product comprising instructions for execution by a second client machine, including:

instructions for requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server;

instructions for receiving, without further request of the requested file piece by the second machine, the requested file piece from a client machine containing a copy of said file piece in lieu of receiving the requested file piece from the server.

17. (Previously presented) A system for distributing information in a computer network, the system comprising:

a dividing component which divides an electronic file into a plurality of pieces;

a first receiver which receives a request for a file piece from a first client machine;

a communications component which downloads the requested file piece to the first client machine;

a second receiver which receives a request for said file piece from a second client machine; and

a redirecting component which redirects the request of the second client machine to the first client machine if said file piece requested from the second client machine has previously been downloaded to the first client machine responsive to the request for said file piece from the first client machine.

18. (Currently amended) A system for distributing information in a computer network, the system comprising:

a ~~first communications~~ component of a first machine which requests one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server; and

a ~~first receiver~~ second component of the first machine which receives the requested file piece from the server;

~~a second receiver which~~ receives a request for said file piece from a client machine, wherein the request is redirected from the server to the first machine; and

~~a second communications component which~~ sends said file piece to said client machine.

19. (Currently amended) A system for obtaining distributed information in a computer network, the system comprising:

a communications component of a first machine requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file from a server, wherein the electronic file is stored in a the server;

a receiver of the first machine which receives the requested file piece, without further request of the requested file piece by the first machine, from a ~~client~~ second machine containing a copy of said file piece in lieu of receiving the requested file piece from the server, the copy of said file piece on the ~~client~~ second machine being the result of a previous request for the file piece from the ~~client~~ second machine to the server and receipt of the file piece from the server to the ~~client~~ second machine.